the United States in the first week of December.

(c) Government of India regularly reviews all developments which may have a bearing on India's security. Government will continue to take all measures necessary to safeguard India's national interests.

Indian help to Afghan Government

551. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Afghan Government headed by Mr. Rabbani had sought India's help to curb Pakistan's ISI activities supporting the Taliban regime;

(b) if so, in what terms such request was made and in what context Government was approached; and

(c) Government reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The Government of Afghanistan has kept India informed of Pakistan's unabated interference in Afghanistan. They have also made it extensively known to the international community. Dr. A. Abdullah, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan during his address at the 53rd Session of the UN General Assembly on September 29, 1998, referred to an evil collusion between the Pakistani Military Intelligence Service (ISI), the Taliban and international terrorism and drug trafficking. During a hearing of the US Senate Foreign Relations Sub-Committee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs on October 8, 1998, Dr. A. Abdullah said that, apart from receiving military logistics, fuel and arms from Pakistan, more than 28,000 Pakistani citizens including paramilitary personnel and military advisers formed part of the Taliban occupation forces in various parts of Afghanistan. He also added that aircrafts from Pakistan participated in bombing Bamyan city in Afghanistan in August ihis year. The leaders of the Government of Afghanistan have repeatedly said that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. The withdrawal of .foreign military and armed personnel, political dialogue aimed at achieving a lasting political settlement of the conflict, and the formation of a fully representative, broad-based, multi-ethnic government would ensure a lasting peace in Afghanistan and the entire region. Government of India has been sending humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan both bilaterally and through the UN.

Plutonium Plant in Pakistan

552. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI AKHILESH DAS:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Indian Express of August 2, 1998, captioned "Pakistan's plutonium plant goes critical", reporting that Pakistan's transition to a plutonium producing nuclear weapons State was soon to become a reality; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction to the 50-70MW Khushab reactor having gone critical, by way of raising matching capability in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has been closely monitoring and continuously assessing the nuclear capability of Pakistan. India has a large, diversified and advanced nuclear programme geared to meeting India's developmental and security challenges. Government remains fully committed to effectively safeguarding the country's security in keeping with its assessment of the national security requirements.

Visit of US President

553. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent (in August-September, 98) visit of the Indian team led by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to New York/ USA, the US Deputy Secretary of States conveyed US-President's keenness to visit New Delhi by September end; and

(b) if so, whether the visit has since materialised and with what results in terms of agreements and MOUs signed during the visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The dates of the visit of the US President to India which are to be decided by mutual agreements have not yet been finalised. Both sides have agreed that the visit should take place in a positive atmosphere.

(b) Does not arise.

लिबिया कि जेलों में भारतीय नागरिक

554. **श्री बरजिन्दर सिंह :**
श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिया :

क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान दिनांक 22 अगस्त, 1998 के दैनिक "इकनोमिक्स टाइम्स" में "पजांबी वर्कर्स इन लिबिया गैट ए रा डील" शीर्ष से प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह सच है कि लिबिया में भारतीय मूल के नगारिक अभी भी जेलों में बदं हैं;

(ग) यदि हां, तो अक्तूबर, 1998 में उनकी संख्या कितनी थी;

(घ) क्या सरकार ने भारतीय मूल के इन नागरिकों को जेलों से रिहा कराने के लिए कोई कार्रवाई की है;

(ड) यदि हां, तो क्या कार्रवाई की गई है और इन नागरिकों के कब तक मुक्त हो जाने की सम्भावना है ?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोमपाल) : (क) 22 अगस्त, 1998 के "इकोनोमिक टाइम्स" में कथित शीर्षक के समाचार की सरकार को जानकारी नहीं है । यथापि, 26 अगस्त, 1998 को एक समाचार पत्र में इस प्रकार के शीर्षक से छपे समाचार पर सरकार ने गौर किया है ।

(ख) और (ग) 31.10.98 की स्थिति के अनुसार 12 भारतीय राष्ट्रिक लीबिया के जेल में थे । भारतीय मूल के विदेशी राष्ट्रिकी के संबंध में सूचना प्राप्त करने का कोई स्रोत अभी सरकार के पास नहीं है ।

(घ) और (ड) जेल में रखे गए 12 में से 10 भारतीय राष्ट्रिकों को 05.11.1998 को जमानत पर रिहा कर दिया गया था। शेष दो भारतीय राष्ट्रिकों में से एक तो लीबिया के न्यायालय द्वारा सुनाई गई सजा काट रहा है और दूसरे को उसकी कार से हुई ट्रैफिक दुर्घटना के संबंध में लीबियाई पुलिस ने बंदी बनाकर रखा हुआ है । दूसरे की रिहाई के लिए सरकार बराबर प्रयास कर रही है ।

Misrepresentation of Kashmir Borders

555. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR:
SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Hungary and Togo Governments in an unusual manner have misrepresented and distorted the Kashmir borders in the maps;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) An article on similar lines as the question was published in the "Times of India" some months ago. The alleged misrepresenta-tior/distortion does not relate to official maps but to a sketch in a stamp brought out by Togo and to a cancellation mark issued in 1989 by Hungary.

(b) and (c) Whenever cases of distortion or misrepresentation of India's external boundaries come to our notice, the issue is immediately taken up with the concerned authorities with a view to its rectification.

Approach to South Africa